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#### WISLR: a reminder What is WISLR? Why WISLR?

In 1995, the WisDOT Secretary and the Local Roads and Streets Council created the Local Roads Database Initiative, an effort aimed at modernizing the database and mapping system for all local roads throughout the state of Wisconsin. As its first major recommendation to the Secretary, the LRSC recommended that the department's existing local roads database provide the foundation to develop a tool that could, for the first time, begin to establish a barometer of needs for Wisconsin's local roads system, and portray those needs pictorially. Managed and supported by WisDOT, the project was launched in 1996 and the first phase was completed in August 2002.

"The new local roads database, now referred to as WISLR (Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads), will be accessible to users via the Internet."

This initial phase allows state and local transportation officials the ability to enhance decision-making through convenient access to local road data. The new local roads database, now referred to as WISLR (Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads), will be accessible to users via the Internet. It is essential that state and local decision makers be able to measure and assess the condition of local roadways and incorporate

Continued on page 2





Rick Jones, Council Chair, Commissioner of Public Works, City of Racine

#### Message from the Council Chair

I'm very pleased to announce that after several years of planning and development, WisDOT unveiled WISLR in late August 2002. Once you begin to use WISLR you will quickly realize that WISLR will provide a manifold increase on your investment in gathering and submitting pavement data. The initial deployment included powerful functionality that enables use of a statewide Geographic Information System (GIS) local road database for: viewing physical inventory data such as pavement width, pavement type, construction year, shoulder, curb, and length information; viewing and printing reports and maps; and displaying data geographically. Take advantage of this opportunity to become familiar with the wealth of information that WISLR can provide.

The pavement rating data submitted by locals and the pavement analysis tools will be ready

Continued on page 4



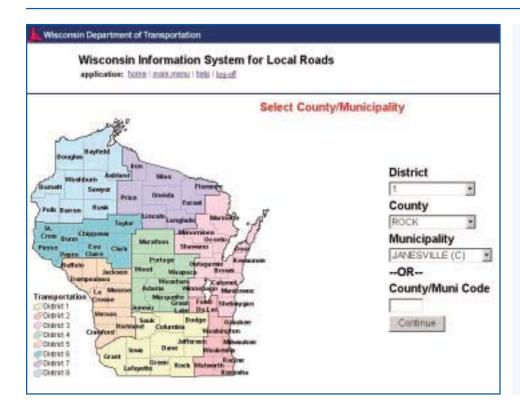
Tom Carlsen, Acting Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Transportation

#### Message from WisDOT Acting Secretary Tom Carlsen

I want to take this opportunity to emphasize the value WisDOT places on our continuing relationships with local governments, the private sector, associations and the general public. Past collaborations have helped us mutually identify issues and consider potential solutions. This shared understanding of perspectives and priorities has been invaluable as we have looked for new opportunities and contemplated difficult choices.

Throughout my career at WisDOT, I have found that establishing relationships and keeping lines of communication open help to make everyone more successful by ensuring familiarity and reducing surprises. When difficult situations do arise, these partnerships have fostered a base of knowledge and level of trust that help moderate

Continued on page 5



#### WISLR: a reminder What is WISLR? Why WISLR?

Continued from page 1

such information into future planning and decision making efforts. Based on related recommendations provided by the LRSC, State Statute 86.302(2) was enacted to require municipalities and counties to submit pavement ratings to WisDOT on a biennial basis. This information will be stored in and accessible throughWISLR.

#### **Benefits of WISLR**

The primary benefit of WISLR is that as a shared resource, it provides local units of government and WisDOT convenient access to local road data to enhance decision-making. Critical information such as pavement condition rating, road width and length, shoulder information, number of lanes, pavement type, construction year, functional classification, etc. will be readily available through this database. WISLR also allows the user to display data geographically (i.e. view data with its location), print reports and maps, and edit/update data instantly.

Maximizing the benefit of WISLR will require a "new way of thinking" for many users. WisDOT and the LRSC are committed to ongoing education

and outreach to promote effective and efficient use of WISLR data to support decision-making.

#### Inventory Responsibility Shifts to Locals

As part of the database redesign effort, the WISLR initiative shifts responsibility for gathering and recording inventory data on local roadways from WisDOT districts to local governments. This means that local governments will be responsible for maintaining their physical roadway attribute inventory data, including data on both existing and newly constructed roadways.

Locals may choose to update this data on-line using WISLR, or through hardcopy *Construction Report Forms* sent to WisDOT. Locals are not expected to verify all of their inventory data at one time. What is expected is that:

- Locals verify inventory data when normal business processes dictate examination of data.
- ➤ Locals make appropriate changes to the database when errors are found (Web access to WISLR allows locals the ability to update data).

Please keep in mind that although locals will be responsible for maintaining inventory data, WisDOT maintains its responsibility for mileage certification.

#### Quick tour of WISLR (See pages 6-13)

- > Select the location of data. (page 6)
- ➤ Use the main menu to selection functions. (page 7)
- View physical inventory data. (page 8)
- ➤ View data on a map. (page 9)
- ➤ View and print C/V/T maps. (page 10)
- View and print reports. (page 11)
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- Pavement condition: view data and print maps. (page 13)

To promote long-term database integrity, local governments will be required to attend WISLR training prior to receiving editing privileges. Training will be offered in spring 2003. Training details will be made available in the coming months.

#### Help! I don't know how to use WISLR!

If local officials anticipate having difficulties using WISLR, or if they simply would like to learn more about WISLR and how to use it, they are in luck! WisDOT will be conducting WISLR training sessions in various regions throughout the state during the spring of 2003. More information will become available as the details regarding training dates, times, and locations are firmed up. Stay tuned for more information!

#### How to obtain access To WISLR

Final details are in process regarding WISLR security access, so please stay tuned—detailed information will be made available in October 2002.

If you are still interested in utilizing WISLR this year, we would appreciate hearing from you. Please send an email to *wislrinfo@dot.state.wi.us* Please title your email "Request for WISLR Access".

### Community Sensitive Design for Wisconsin Highways

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is preparing training materials and will soon start to implement a new way of doing business called **Community Sensitive Design (CSD).** The Department has spent over a year developing its philosophy and putting in place procedural changes that will allow for the successful implementation of this program. It has also received and incorporated comments from various stakeholders such as the Local Roads and Streets Council, environmental groups, and the Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association.

Interest in this concept peaked in the late 1990's with the publication of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) document entitled Flexibility in Highway Design. Following this publication, FHWA, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and a long list of stakeholder and special interest groups held a major conference in Maryland titled "Thinking Beyond the Pavement." One outcome of the conference was that FHWA provided some seed money to five pilot states that agreed to implement the CSD principles and share their experiences with others. WisDOT staff reviewed the policies and procedures from the pilot states, along with the input received from stakeholders, and have developed their own philosophy, guiding principles and areas of change that fit the Wisconsin highway project development process.

Community Sensitive Design (CSD) is defined as a process of planning and designing a transportation facility that provides safety and mobility while fitting into its physical, cultural, social and environmental setting and is recognized as an asset by the area or community it serves. It asks questions about the purpose, need, operation and cost of the transportation project and the preservation of scenic aesthetic, historic, environmental and other local values to strike an appropriate balance. CSD involves a collaborative, interdisciplinary

approach in which all stakeholders are part of the planning and design process. The CSD approach uses the flexibility already provided for in the current design standards and policies rather than establishing any new or different standards.

The following project development guiding principles are the cornerstone of WisDOT's project development process. They must be understood and adhered to if WisDOT is to be a leader in project and transportation excellence.

- ➤ Involve customers and stakeholders early and continuously
- Use an interdisciplinary project development approach
- Emphasize good project management
- ➤ Be sensitive to environmental issues
- Provide an aesthetically pleasing, quality product
- Provide safe and efficient facilities
- Deliver quality projects on time and within budget

To incorporate these principles and philosophy into their projects, WisDOT is revising its processes in three areas:

#### 1. Public Involvement Process

The public will be involved earlier and more often in project decisions. Project managers will approach their initial meetings with the public with a blank page and listen to what the communities value and feel are important. After this is determined, the project manager will use this information to begin the design process.

The project manager will involve the communities in the balancing of their needs with the needs of the traveling public. A goal of this process is to develop trust and respect between all parties.

#### 2. Design Standards

The design tables will be modified to allow more of the design flexibility afforded by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Official (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets. On roadways with lower functional classifications, increased levels of congestion may be allowed, but basic engineering safety criteria will be maintained.

#### 3. Development of Aesthetics Budget and a Revision to the Cost Share Policy

Money will be available in project budgets to help mitigate the impacts of state road construction projects on their communities. This money may be spent on a variety of eligible items that the communities will choose. These items will be included in the construction contract.

The dollar amount available to communities will vary based on the visual impact of the project on the community and the type of project to be constructed.

Training will be available to WisDOT staff, consultants, and other interested stakeholders starting in January 2003. Following this training, state highway projects should be designed using the CSD philosophy. Given the normal planning/design timeframe, projects that incorporate all aspects of the philosophy will not be built until about 2006. For more information about this program, please contact Beth Cannestra, WisDOT, at 608.267.7943.



#### General Transportation Aids Information Readily Available

As a reminder, quarterly 2003 estimates and payment information for General Transportation Aids and Connecting Highways Aids is available through the WisDOT Web site. The Internet site contains a complete listing of CY 2003 estimates and the quarterly payment amounts made to each town, village, city and county in Wisconsin. The information can be accessed at www.dot.state.wi.us in the "News Release" section. The listing of annual estimates are published in October and December of each year. The listing of quarterly payment amounts and an associated news release are published on the first Monday of January, April, July and October.



Plum Vitae Road, in the Town of Plum Lake (Vilas County), was resurfaced in 2000 with Town Road Improvement Program and local funds.

#### **Council Chair Message**

Continued from page 1

for use shortly after the initial deployment—an anticipated September/October timeframe. These tools will provide local governments the ability to display pavement condition rating data and estimate pavement needs (maintenance and capital improvement). These tools can be used for local planning purposes, and they also provide the ability to credibly assess current statewide local road pavement needs.

## "...WisDOT unveiled WISLR in late August 2002. Once you begin to use WISLR you will quickly realize that WISLR will provide a manifold increase on your investment in gathering and submitting pavement data."

Please recall that WISLR provides local units of government with the ability and the responsibility to maintain physical roadway data (e.g. width, shoulder, construction year, pavement type, etc.). WisDOT will be sponsoring WISLR training sessions in Spring 2003 to ensure the accurate updating of WISLR data.

To obtain more information about WISLR, please review the WISLR article and screen shots previewed in this newsletter.

#### Update on the Secretary's Committee on Local Program Streamlining

The Secretary's Committee on Local Program Streamlining (SCOLPS) met in Madison on September 11, 2002 to continue its work of identifying ways to simplify and speed up the development process for federally funded local highway and bridge projects.

This working committee, consisting of state and federal DOT officials, local government representatives, and representatives from the construction industry and consulting engineering groups, was created in 1999 by former WisDOT Secretary Charles Thompson in response to suggestions contained in the Delivery Cost Study Group, a workgroup set up by the Local Roads and Streets Council. The charge of the Local Program Streamlining Committee was to evaluate the issues and suggestions raised by the *Delivery* Cost Study Report and to recommend specific policy and procedure changes that could reduce the cost and decrease the time to develop and construct local projects.

Working from a list of more than 70 items contained in the *Delivery Cost Study Report*, SCOLPS has met at least quarterly since late 1999 and is under the leadership of WisDOT Division of Transportation Infrastructure Development Administrator Gary Whited. To date, more than 60 items have been addressed and WisDOT has already adopted a number of changes. Two of the most significant of these are:

- ➤ A pilot "fast-track" process for plan submittal prior to project letting, which is now in its second year; and
- ➤ A WisDOT Division of Transportation Districts management team recommendation to implement a consistent statewide level-of-service and staffing standard in all WisDOT districts to assist in local project development and delivery.

Several items have been examined and found to be not feasible at the present time, such as eliminating the Governor's approval of contracts and allowing local governments to design and let federal-aid projects using local processes and procedures.

Work is still in progress on a number of important issues raised in the *Delivery Cost Study Report*. At the September 11, 2002 meeting, the SCOLPS received an update on three important efforts:

- ➤ A proposal to establish better "pre-scoping" of local highway and bridge projects by local and state officials prior to submittal of local project funding requests. This will reduce the amount of project cost increase and schedule delay on local projects, and help local governments make more informed decisions about which projects to submit for funding.
- ➤ Work by the LRSC Regulatory, Environmental and Legislative (REAL) Committee in conjunction with WisDOT and WisDNR to look for ways to streamline the environmental review process by more quickly identifying projects for which in depth review is appropriate.
- ➤ The possibility of including local projects with state projects in efforts to improve coordination with utilities on highway and street construction.

The Committee has scheduled two more meetings, in December 2002 and March 2003, at which time it hopes to have completed work on all of these issues. Committee members indicated in discussion that they anticipate that the group's final report will contain a recommendation to WisDOT Acting Secretary Tom Carlsen that some sort of permanent group be established to provide a forum where the same parties can continue to talk about local highway program issues.

#### **Acting Secretary Message**

Continued from page 1

these challenges. Working together helps maximize benefits to suit everyone's needs.

The Local Roads and Streets
Council is one of WisDOT's best
partnering examples. WisDOT has
worked closely with this recommending
body to the Secretary over the
last eight years. The LRSC has been
effective because members understand
that their role is to represent local
transportation on a statewide basis.
Communities may have different
viewpoints on some

"The LRSC is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished by removing parochial interests and striving to solve problems with broader statewide interests in mind."

issues, but during council deliberations members know that their charge is to focus on the "big picture" of enhancing the 100,000-mile network of local roads around the state. LRSC members and their associations certainly advocate for their own self-interests in other venues, but I have been impressed with the statesmanship displayed during council efforts. The LRSC is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished by removing parochial interests and striving to solve problems with broader statewide interests in mind.

I am very excited about the benefits that our past collaborations have produced and I look forward to future partnering efforts. I truly appreciate peoples' time, interest and effort in working cooperatively with WisDOT on transportation issues affecting the state. Together we will continue to make a positive impact on transportation across Wisconsin.

Please e-mail the council with your questions

**Rick Jones** 

Council Chair 262.636.9121 rjones@cityofracine.org

**Mary Forlenza** 

WisDOT Staff Chair 608.264.8724 mary.forlenza@dot.state.wi.us

#### Calendar of events

**Local Roads and Streets Council meetings** are held every other month at the city council chambers in Wisconsin Rapids beginning at 10 a.m.

The meeting schedule for the remainder of 2002 is: September 4, and November 6. The meeting schedule for 2003 will be listed in the winter issue of the newsletter. Interested people are invited to attend council meetings. Please contact *Brian Zirbes*, WisDOT, at 608.264.8426 to confirm meeting dates and times.

#### October 10, 2002: Local Government Center WisLine (formerly ETN) Teleconference Series—Road Right-of-Way.

Please contact the Local Government Center at the UW-Extension at 608.262.9961 for questions and registration to all WisLine Teleconference Series meetings.

October 13–16, 2002: Wisconsin Towns Association Annual Convention, Radisson Hotel and Convention Center, La Crosse.

October 23–25, 2002: League of Wisconsin Municipalities Annual Conference, Marriott West, Middleton.

November 8, 2002: Local Government Center WisLine (formerly ETN) Teleconference Series—GASB 34 and Local Government.

Please contact the Local Government Center at the UW-Extension at 608.262.9961 for questions and registration to all WisLine Teleconference Series meetings.

**November 12, 13, 17, & 18, 2002: One day Culvert workshops** provided by the University of Wisconsin Transportation Information Center at four sites across the state. Please contact the UW–TIC at 800.442.4615 for questions and registration to UW–TIC courses.

November 13–15, 2002: Fall Conference of the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Public Works Association, Radisson Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton.

**2003 LRSC meetings:** January 8, March 5, May 7, July 9, September 10 and November 5.

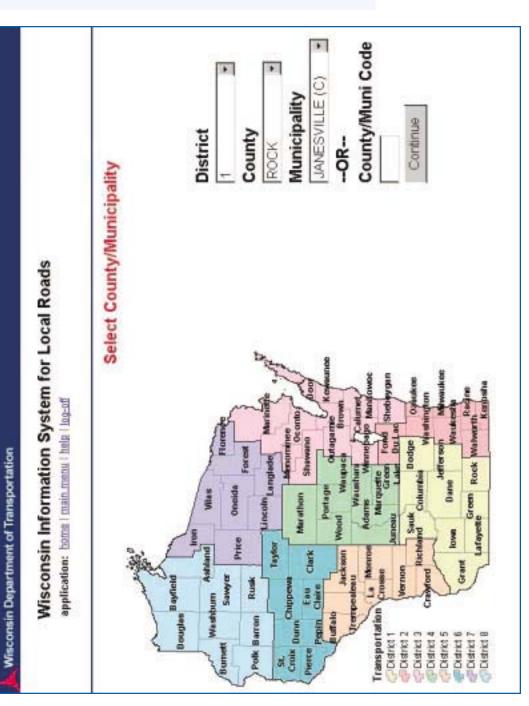


#### **Electronic newsletter**

Just a reminder that the Local Roads and Streets Council newsletter is now available exclusively in an electronic format. The newsletter is being sent via e-mail to the addresses we have on file.

The newsletter is also available on the Internet through the WisDOT Web site at www.dot.state.wi.us/opa/news.html. Copies of previous issues of the newsletter are also available on the Internet. To add or change e-mail addresses, please contact the LRSC by e-mail at *Irsc@dot.state.wi.us*, or call *Brian Zirbes*, WisDOT, at 608.264.8426.

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- ➤ Select the location of data. (page 6)
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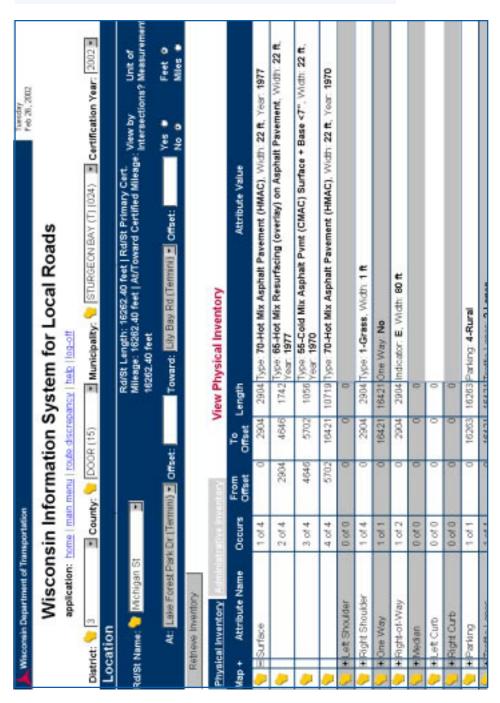
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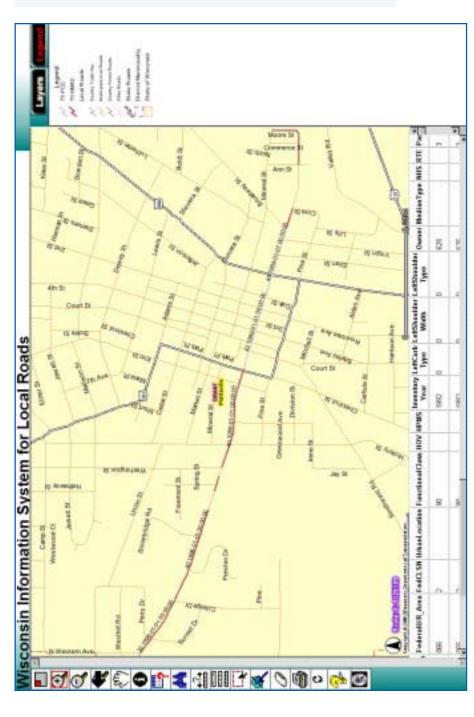
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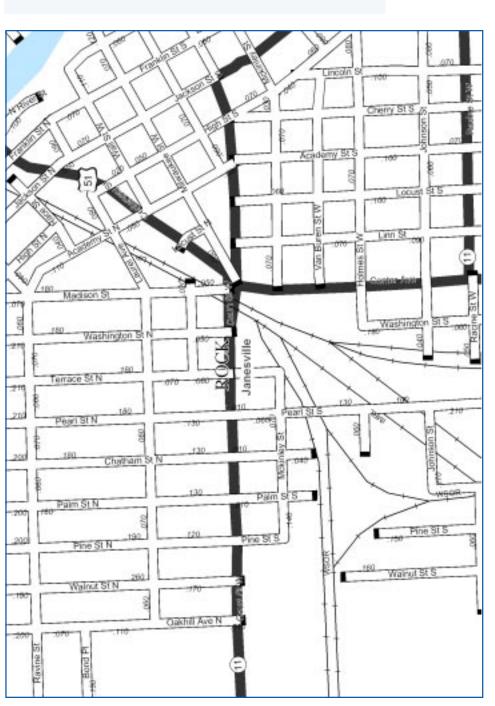
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## **Quick Tour of WISLR**

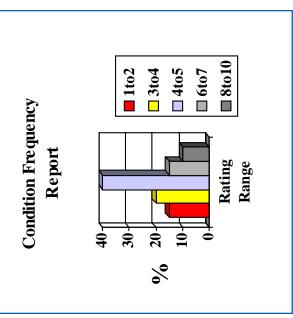
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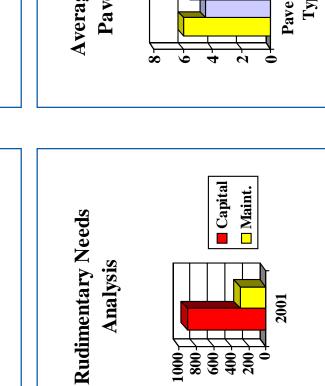
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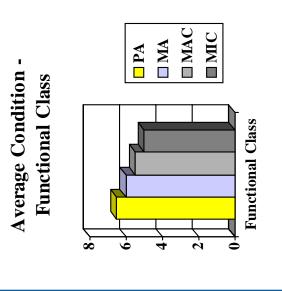
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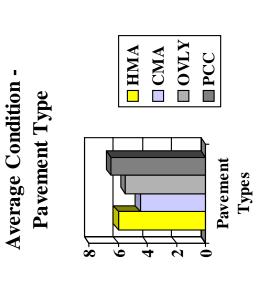
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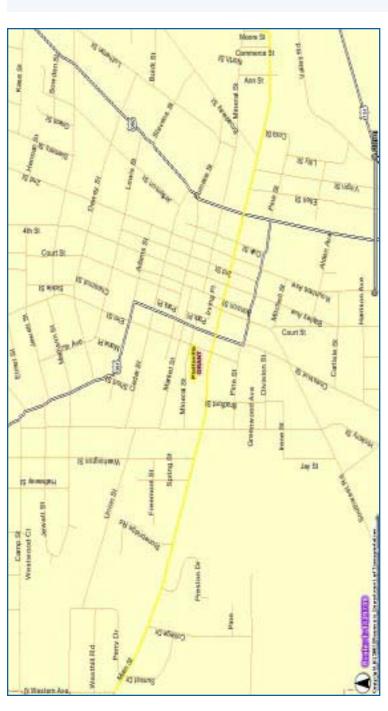
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